

# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks for preschoolers (ages 1-4) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP. For additional guidance on the preschool meal pattern and crediting requirements, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) guide, [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#), and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. They include foods and beverages in amounts too small to credit (i.e., less than the minimum creditable amount), and foods and beverages that do not belong to the meal pattern components. Examples include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water. The chart on page 2 lists additional examples of noncreditable foods for preschool meals and ASP snacks. This list is not all-inclusive.

School food authorities (SFAs) may serve noncreditable foods in addition to the meal components to add variety, help improve acceptability in the meal, and satisfy appetites. Examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches and other entrees.

To ensure that preschool meals and ASP snacks meet children's nutritional needs, the CSDE encourages SFAs to use discretion when serving noncreditable foods. Noncreditable foods typically contain few nutrients and are higher in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Menu planners should read labels, be aware of the ingredients in foods, and limit the frequency and amount of less nutritious choices.

Some noncreditable foods (such as candy, soda, coffee, tea, and sports drinks) cannot be sold in school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, see the CSDE's competitive foods guides ([Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools](#), [Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools](#), and [Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions](#)) and visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.



# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

## Examples of noncreditable foods for preschoolers (ages 1-4) <sup>1</sup>

Almond milk <sup>2</sup>	Rice milk <sup>2</sup>
Bacon and bacon bits	Salad dressings
Banana chips	Scones, sweet, e.g., blueberry, raisin, or orange cranberry <sup>5</sup>
Bread products that are not whole grain or enriched <sup>3</sup>	Gelatin, regular and sugar free
Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) with more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce <sup>4</sup>	Grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies <sup>5</sup>
Brownies <sup>5</sup>	Grains that are not whole or enriched <sup>3</sup>
Butter	Granola bars <sup>5</sup>
Cake <sup>5</sup>	Honey
Candy <sup>6</sup>	Hot chocolate <sup>5</sup>
Candy-coated popcorn <sup>6</sup>	Ice cream
Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo <sup>6</sup>	Ice cream novelties
Cereal bars <sup>5</sup>	Ice milk
Cinnamon buns or rolls <sup>5</sup>	Iced coffee <sup>6</sup>
Coconut, dried	Iced tea <sup>6</sup>
Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced) <sup>6</sup>	Jam and jelly
Commercial processed products without a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS), e.g., entrees, smoothies, and breaded vegetables <sup>7</sup>	Lemonade <sup>6</sup>
Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements	Limeade <sup>6</sup>
Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, and barbecue sauce	Maple syrup
Cookies <sup>5</sup> , except for animal crackers and graham crackers	Margarine
Cranberry cocktail drink <sup>6</sup>	Marshmallows
Cream, half and half	Mayonnaise
Cream cheese	Mustard
Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, and cream of broccoli	Milk for age 1: Plain or flavored reduced fat (2%), plain or flavored low-fat (1%), and plain or flavored fat-free
Drinkable or squeezable yogurt <sup>8</sup>	Milk for ages 2-5: Plain or flavored whole, plain or flavored reduced fat (2%), and flavored low-fat (1%)
Eggnog <sup>6</sup>	Nondairy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes <sup>2</sup>
Egg whites	Pastries <sup>5</sup>
Frozen yogurt <sup>8</sup>	Pie <sup>5</sup>
Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix <sup>6</sup>	Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)
Fruit leathers (100 percent fruit)	Potato chips
Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice) <sup>6</sup>	Probiotic dairy drinks
Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, twists	Pudding
	Pudding pops

# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

## Examples of noncreditable foods for preschoolers (ages 1-4) <sup>1</sup>, *continued*

Sherbet	Sweet rolls <sup>5</sup>
Soda, regular and diet <sup>6</sup>	Syrup
Soups, non-vegetable (canned or frozen), e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice	Tea, regular, herbal, and iced <sup>6</sup>
Sour cream	Toaster pastries <sup>5</sup>
Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes <sup>2</sup>	Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume) <sup>9</sup>
Sports drinks, regular and diet <sup>6</sup>	Water <sup>10</sup>
Spreadable fruit	Yogurt or soy yogurt in commercial smoothies <sup>7</sup>
	Yogurt or soy yogurt with more than more than 3.83 grams of total sugars per ounce <sup>8</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Snack foods sold a la carte must meet the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) (which apply to public school districts that participate in the healthy food option of [Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\)](#)) or the USDA's [Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards (which apply to public school districts that do not participate in the healthy food option of HFC, and to private schools and residential child care institutions).
- <sup>2</sup> Milk substitutes must meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#).
- <sup>3</sup> For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- <sup>4</sup> For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- <sup>5</sup> These items are grain-based desserts and cannot credit in the preschool meal patterns. For more information, see the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- <sup>6</sup> These competitive foods and beverages cannot be sold in the USDA's school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.
- <sup>7</sup> Commercial products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in preschool meals and snacks. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Product Formulation Statements](#) and [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP](#); and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage..
- <sup>8</sup> For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- <sup>9</sup> For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- <sup>10</sup> The [Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act](#) requires that schools make drinking water available to children at no charge where meals are served during the meal service (including the ASP). However, SFAs cannot promote or offer water or any other beverage as an alternative selection to fluid milk throughout the food service area. For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 49-2016 CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities](#) and [USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs](#).

# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

## Resources

Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program>

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPHandbook.pdf>

Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPMealPatternPreschool.pdf>

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/MilkSubstitutesSchools.pdf>

Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalculationSNPpreschool.pdf>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Competitive Foods in Schools (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Competitive-Foods>

Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Connecticut-Nutrition-Standards>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCerealsSNPpreschool.pdf>

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCommercialMMASNP.pdf>

Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditDeliSNP.pdf>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditEnrichedGrainsSNP.pdf>

Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources>

Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditTofuSNP.pdf>

## Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditWholeGrainsSNP.pdf>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideHFC.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideNonHFC.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuidePrivateRCCI.pdf>

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Healthy-Food-Certification>

How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/IdentifyCreditableGrainsPreschool.pdf>

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/List-of-Acceptable-Foods-and-Beverages>

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Menu Planning Guidance for Preschoolers in the ASP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPmpgpreschool.pdf>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/mpgpreschool.pdf>

Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ResourcesPreschoolMealPattern.pdf>

USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-042516>

USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources-making-potable-water-available-schools-and-child-care-facilities-0>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRCriteriaSNPpreschool.pdf>

# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP



For more information, review the CSDE's guide, *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/NoncreditableFoodsSNPpreschool.pdf>.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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